

FARMS

For a rural county such as Jackson County, a relatively small percentage of people are actually engaged in farming. Only 2.7 percent of the population is engaged in agricultural related employment. This compares with 4.9 percent for the State and 3.5 with the nation.

Like other places in North Carolina and other parts of the country, the number of farms has been decreasing in Jackson County. Between 1964 and 1969, the county lost 282 or thirty-four (34%) percent of its farms (Table 25). The size of farms by acres has also been decreasing between 1964 and 1969 (Tables 26 and 27). Table 28 gives farms by economic class in Jackson County in 1969.

The total land area for the county is 242,400 acres. Farm acreage was 56,687 in 1964 and 36,516 in 1969, a drop of some 20,000 acres of farm land. In 1969 15.1 percent of total acreage was in farm land as compared with 23.4 percent in 1964.

Table 29 shows that even though farming has decreased in the county, the average value of land and buildings per farm has increased some \$12,600 between 1964 and 1969. Cash receipts from farming and government payments for Jackson and surrounding counties are shown in Table 30.

Since farming is decreasing as a way of living in the county, every effort will be needed to supply jobs for people coming out of the farming population. If new jobs are not provided these people will either leave the county seeking employment or remain and depend on public assistance for their livelihood.